

SONNETS AND LYRICS



GIBSON

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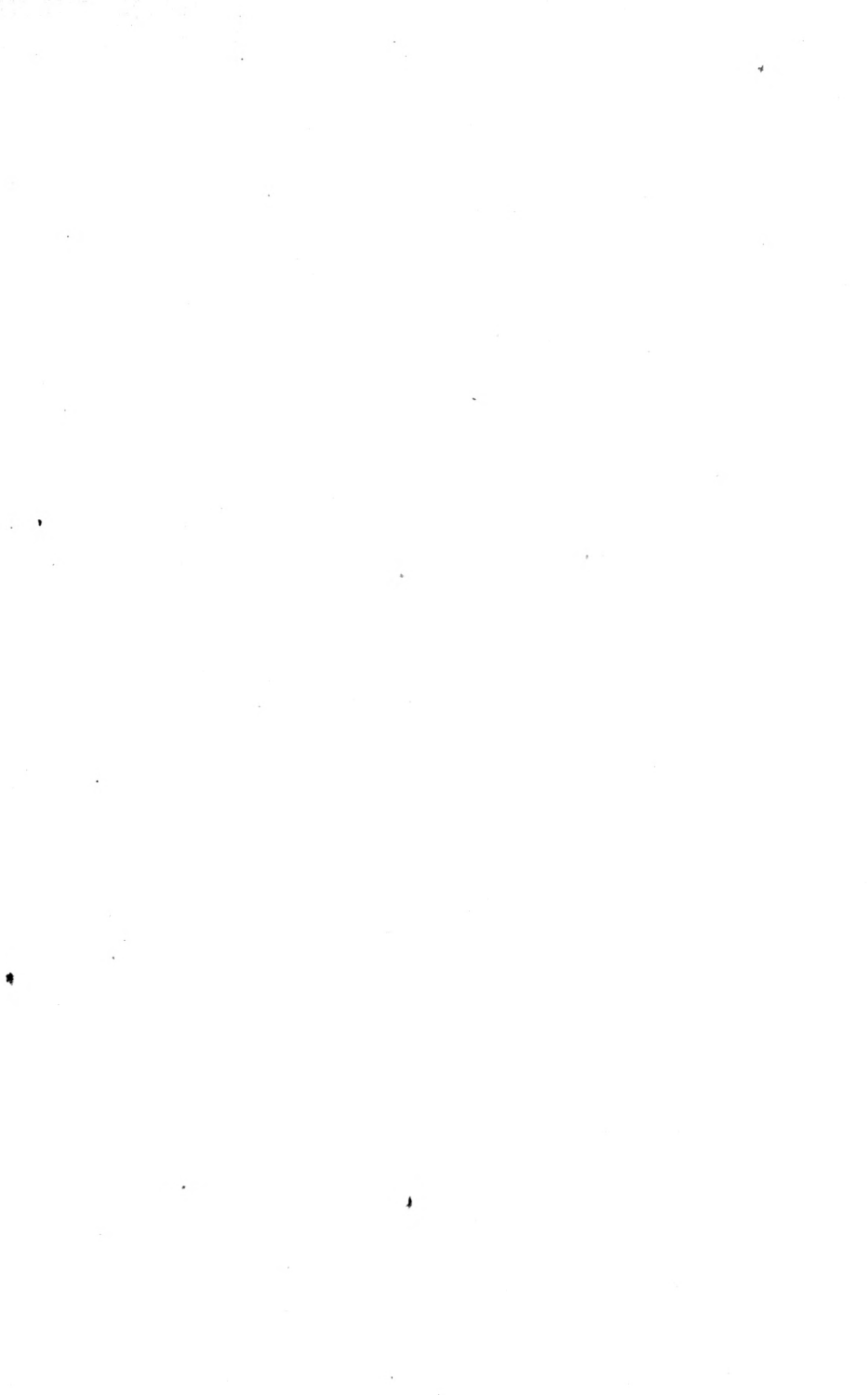


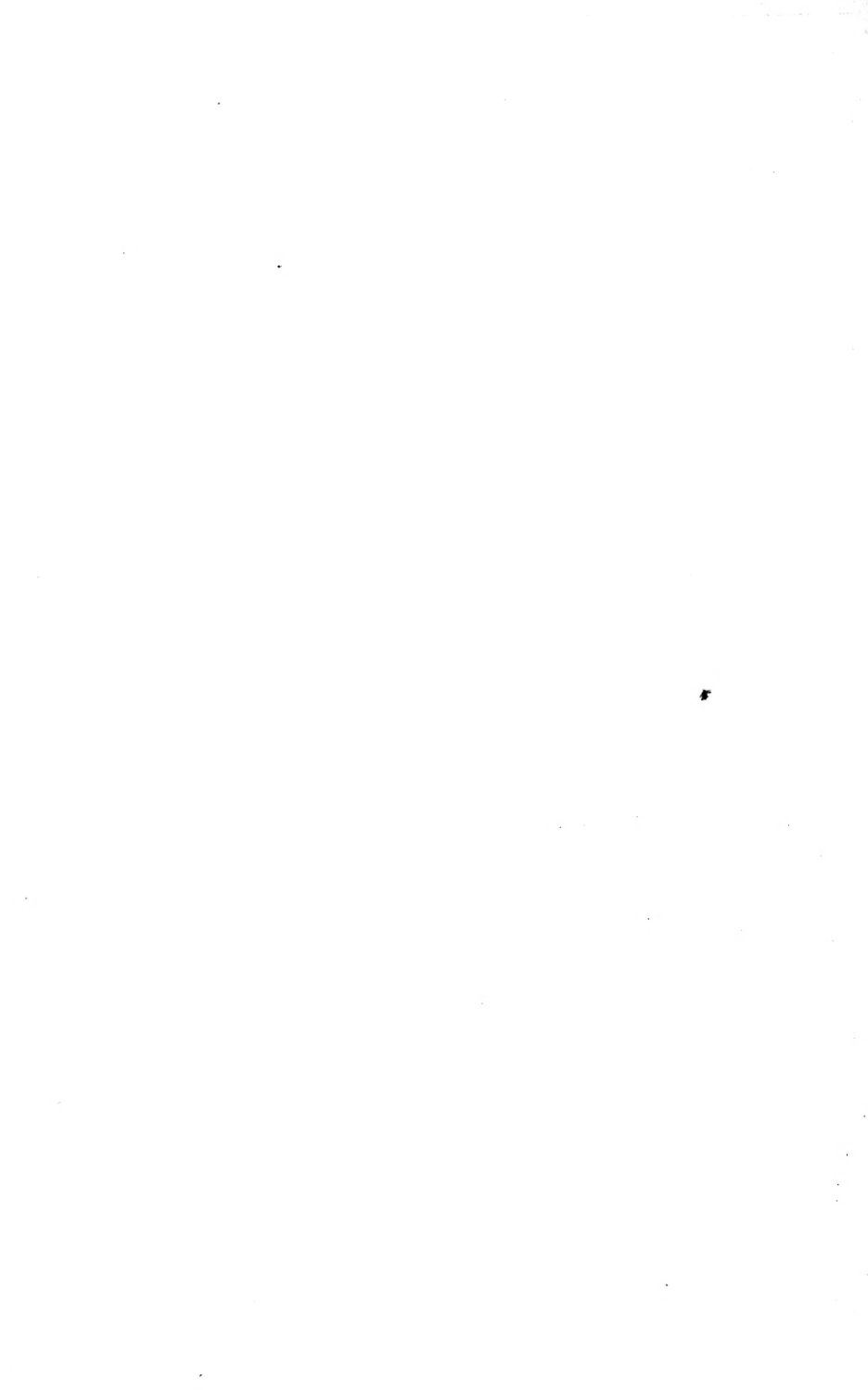
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SONNETS AND LYRICS



P. E. Lee Gibson

SONNETS AND YRICS

BY

R. E. LEE GIBSON



John P. Morton & Company

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To
THE DISTINGUISHED POET
MADISON CAWEIN.

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TO MADISON CAWEIN.

OET, your hand has pluck'd the fairest flowers
In all Castalia; from the clearest rill
Of Helicon, your soul has drunk its fill;
Your eyes have seen Parnassus; there are hours,
Wherein you've wandered 'mid the brightest bowers
Of Arcady; subservient to your will,
Dreams throng about you, and sweet thoughts that thrill
The Heart, are 'wakened by your magic powers.
The beauty of your verses even now
With ecstasy my happy heart has swayed,
And left me wondering if beneath a bough,
In some deep forest where perchance you strayed,
You had met Pan,—old Pan, who taught you how
The golden music of his flute was made.

St. Louis, Mo.

SONNETS AND LYRICS.

I.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL.

N arch-contriver of sweet phrase, I gain
An entrance to the wonderlands of song;
To me the happy faculties belong
The shining peaks of Pindus to attain.
A glad sojourner in that fair domain,
Around me oft celestial fancies throng,
And often-times I seem to drift along,
Like misty Danaë in a golden rain!
For once upon a time, from fable-lands,
Came forth the volant Muses, lily-fair,
With garlands trailing from their glowing hands,
And scattering fragrance in the sparkling air;
They found me musing, and at their commands,
The laurel-wreath was braided 'round my hair.

II.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

S CORN not to count me as one poet more,
Critic, for though I sing a lowly song,
My voice is sweet with promise, and, ere long,
May well be burdened with the Muse's lore.
And though indeed I may not hope to soar
On skylark wings, nor on the pinions strong
Of eagles sweep, yet forth amid the throng
Of humbler birds my plaintive notes I'll pour.
One of the songsters of the forest singing,
Simple my strains, and yet with power to bless ;
One of the wild-flowers in the woodland springing,
Modest my garb, yet fragrance I possess ;
One of the bees about the musk-rose clinging,
Lowly am I, but poet none the less.

III.

POETARUM DOLORES.

THOU who wouldst venture for the flowers of song
On far Euterpean heights, O bear in mind,
Fate to our gentle race was never kind;
Much have we borne of obloquy and wrong.
What tragic memories in our annals throng!
Tasso in madness to a cell consigned;
Dante in exile; Homer old and blind;
And Petrarch sorrowful his whole life long.
As Enna's queen, within a flowery glade,
Weaving her anadem in quiet bliss,
Was carried to an underworld of shade,
In the fell clutches of the demon Dis,
Twining our garlands that shall never fade,
We, too, are gathered to Woe's dark abyss.

IV.

NIGHT.

RED-BREASTED eve has perch'd against the west,
Low letting sink her ebon pinion — night ;
Each floweret shuts its fragile blossom tight,
And with bowed head is zephyr-lulléd to rest.
The sleepy bird flits twittering to its nest ;
Athwart the gloom an owlet takes its flight ;
The moon, a spectre, ghastly, grim and white,
Above the hill-tops thrusts her sombre crest.
My heart turns sick ; I lift it up and pray,
And all its ominous fancies routed are ;
“Thou art, O Night, far lovelier than Day,”
I cry, as on my vision breaks a star,
Betok'ning this : Who turns to Heaven alway
Shall see, howe'er the darkness, light afar !

V.

DEEP IN THE FOREST.

UPON a time, beneath these forest boughs,
Perchance the wood-nymph sported; it may be
That faun and satyr, by this ancient tree,
Were wont of old to revel and carouse.
Or Dian here was haply wont to drowse
Under the shade; a dryad, blithe and free,
Once may have frolick'd, and with shouts of glee,
Twined here with garlands her effulgent brows.
This quiet wood; this space of shade and shine;
Haunted of bird and bee, where no god strays,
Where solitude has built her secret shrine,
Lures me to wander 'mid its leafy ways,
And hear the wind through rustling branch and vine,
Dirge the lost glory of those bygone days.

VI.

THE NAIAD.

AH me, the naiad in the purling brook,
Disporting, borne upon its rippling breast,
Or couched at ease amid some ferny nest,
Is seen no more; for though we lean and look,
Searching with care in every secret nook
For the nymph's covert, 't is a futile quest;
These lovely beings, it must be confessed,
Have in these days their olden haunts forsook.
They have departed from our streams for good,
As have the oreads from the knoll away,
Or as the hamadryads from the wood,
Leaving no trace of their romantic stay;
And where they swam, amid the crystal flood,
We now but see the silvery trout at play.

VII.

WITCHCRAFT.

DID not wise Mather, in old Salem days,
Believe in witchcraft? People then were known
To shun their fellows, and go forth alone
And cast their lot with Satan's. By the blaze
Of midnight fagots, from the curious gaze
Of mortals hid, they made his skill their own.
How could they else upon the winds have flown,
Or in the air have walked upon their ways?
I do believe a remnant of that art,
From earliest ages has been handed down;
That Sylvia has it; that her wiles impart
Havoc like that which spread in Salem town;
For with a smile she stole away my heart,
Only to crush it with a cruel frown.

VIII.

THE DUEL.

THIS is the spot; the shadow of the wood,
In immemorial twilight shrouds the place,
Now as of old, when arm'd and face to face,
Here in the dawn sworn enemies once stood.
Haply his chances, whether ill or good,
Each weighed; and calmly for a moment's space
Looked on his rival, with nor sign nor trace
Of fear depicted in his mien or mood.
Then while a kerchief fluttered to the ground,
And shots rang out, — and by a crimson stain
The earth was sullied for a space around,
A fair girl came, and with a cry of pain,
Stood as bewildered by the flash and sound,
And swooning fell where lay her lover slain.

IX.

“THE LADY OF SHALOTT.”

PERCHANCE a fragment of the poet's rhyme
Came in my sleep : and, in a region dim,

Fragrant with barley, by a river's brim,
I dreamed I wandered, in a distant clime.

There I was conscious of the golden prime

Of good King Arthur ; and I rode with him ;

Once at a tourney 'neath the turrets grim
Of Camelot, we whiled away the time.

Again, I fancied that I saw appear

Pale dames of Brittany who drooped forlorn,
And armored knights who courteously drew near ;

And next I witnessed, ere I woke at morn,
Borne down the tide, before my dreaming eye,

The Fairy Lady of Shalott drift by.

X.

COLONIAL.

THE old house, many-gabled, far withdrawn
From the broad highway, and despoiled with age,
Torn by the summer's wrath, the winter's rage,
Still stands austere upon the spacious lawn.
In other days, the couriers here at dawn
Rode like the wind, by word or written page
Announcing tidings from Burgoyne or Gage,
Or with Cornwallis how the day had gone.
Time, like a Tory, loyal to the crown,
As loath to leave, seems fondly here to cling ;
It were no marvel though a ghost strode down,
Among the cedars, where the wildbirds sing,
In buckled shoon, cocked hat, and velvet gown,
Firm in the faith that George the Third is king.

XI.

SEVERN AT KEATS' GRAVE.

DUTY could prompt no more, nor love suggest
Aught for his comfort we had left undone,
Who watched the sinking of his life's young sun,
And felt the presence of his night of rest.
And though our tears our poignant grief expressed,
We nursed the knowledge of a triumph won,
That somewhere, though his earthly race was run,
His soul sped onward in life's happier quest.
Broken in spirit and constrained to roam,
Searching for life, the youthful poet came,
And in the haven of a Roman home
Yielded his breath: forevermore his name,
Written in water, like the wave-flung foam,
Shall ride the billows of enduring fame.

XII.

ON A PICTURE OF "*SATYR AND NYMPHS*."

PAUSE but an instant, for the briefest glance,
Satyr, that watchest 'midst Arcadian hills,
Blithe nymphs disporting by the crystal rills,
With kirtles flowing in the mazy dance;
Risk not thy safety by a rash advance,
Nor tempt too long the music that distills
Its fluted accents 'mongst the daffodils,
Lest its spell plunge thee in some dreadful trance.
One moment only stay thy steps and see;
Thou art not shod with helplessness like us,
But hoofed and nimble canst evade the snare;
We mortals, falling into danger thus,
Having no satyr limbs wherewith to flee,
Were lured to madness by a scene so fair.

✓ XIII.

TYRANNY.

WOULD it were happiness, and not sweet pain,
Which Love involves the Heart in ; leaving out
The leaden links of agony and doubt,
Would that he bound us with a lighter chain.
Or, since in bondage we must needs remain,
Slaves to his will,—why should he forge about
The Heart a gyve too cumbersome and stout,
To lead so frail a captive in his train?
In silken meshes is the song-bird snared ;
The minnow ambushed in a fragile seine ;
The squirrel's cage is slenderly prepared,—
So light a thrall may timid things constrain,—
All save the Heart are mercifully spared ;
Would that Love drew it by a gentler chain !

XIV.

JOB.

THAT man of Uz whom Thou didst scourge of old,
Didst strip of his possessions, and bereave
Of sons and daughters, that he might receive
The lash of pain in measure manifold;
Was he not, Lord, a man of righteous mold,
Of earnest heart, courageous to achieve
Grace in Thy sight, and to Thy love to cleave,
Suiting Thy words, "My servant Job, behold,
An upright, just and perfect man is he"?
Surely those ills were rained upon his head,
And all those sorrows he was made to see,
That others stricken might be comforted,
That others chastened might endure the rod,
With like submission to the will of God.

XV.

“BAYOU FOLK.”

To the Author of “Bayou Folk.”

MADAM, your work is destined to receive
Still wider recognition; in these days,
Among the writers whom we justly praise,
Few pens such triumphs as your own achieve.
Witness the stories which you richly weave
Of Creole life, wherein your art portrays
Real men and women, and in charming ways,
Constrains us with them to rejoice or grieve.
This book of yours which I have read to-night
Pleases me much: my words but feebly tell
How I have followed with intense delight
The fortunes that these bayou folk befell;
The pen most truly is a thing of might
In hands like yours that wield its power so well.

XVI.

MISTLETOE AND OAK.

THE mistletoe about the mighty oak,
With fringe as delicate as fairy lace,
Scales the gnarled boughs and wraps with easeful grace
The forest monarch in its leafy cloak.
Beauty and strength, combining, thus evoke
Our pleased surprise ; here in this wildwood space,
Frailty and power in a fast embrace,
Seem like an emblem of love's gentle yoke.
From lovers truly they learned thus to twine,
Sealing their compact in the sombre wood ;
Haply did Vivien in this wise recline
On Merlin's bosom, in an amorous mood ;
Or Marian nestle, like a graceful vine,
On the bold breast of sturdy Robin Hood.

XVII.

FUNEREAL.

ROWS of funereal emblems ; banks of flowers ;
And the dim tapers at the foot and head ;
And underneath the fitful light they shed,
The sombre casket ; and the long, dull hours,
Lagging, while night amid their shadows cowers ;—
Such is the vigil by the shrouded dead,
The solemn watch that with a sense of dread,
And deep despondency the soul o'erpowers.
But soon the dawn will redden ; and the gloom,
Lessen a little ; and the great sun smite
The darkness from him ; and the day will bloom
In its accustomed splendor ; and the night
Fade ; and a sweet voice in the hallowed room,
Lift the consoling hymn, “ Lead, Kindly Light.”

XVIII.

THE PIONEER.

INURED to hardship,—putting fear aside,—
His purpose dared, while yet our coasts were new,
To press beyond the confines, and to hew
The path of empire through a waste untried.
The mountain echoes to his voice replied ;
The lordly rivers sped his birch canoe ;
And, in the forest, like a dream come true,
Around his cabin, stretched his cornfield wide.
Though savage red-men oft assailed him sore,
In deadly feud, with flint-lock and with blade,
And wild beasts tracked him to his lonely door,
He scoffed at danger, steadfast, unafraid ;
Such were the ills our sturdy fathers bore,
And such the stuff whereof their hearts were made.

XIX.

BAGDAD.

✓
O H, to have traversed, in Al Rashid's reign,
The streets of storied Bagdad; to have seen,
Blazing with jewels in the morning sheen,
The splendid pageant of the Caliph's train.
From far Balsora to have voyaged fain,
Sailing with Sinbad; to have dwelt serene,
After my travels, in a calm demesne,
Loaded with honors and with worldly gain.
For I am wearied of this irksome clime,
Where, spent with toil, we daily strive for bread;
It was not so in Bagdad's golden prime,
When good Haroun was Caliph, where, instead,
Favored of fortune, in a moment's time,
The world's vast treasures at one's feet were spread.

XX.

LANDSCAPES.

THE same bleak wilderness that, lo, these years
My feet have strayed in, Life still seems to be ;
At every point the same sad scenes I see,
Which long have pained me, in this Vale of Tears ;
Nothing is changed ; save, as the twilight nears,
The ways grow dimmer ; and each shrub and tree
Wears gloomier aspect ; and there comes on me
A mightier burden of mysterious fears.
The wind's weird whisper ; the complaining shrill
Of blasts far-off ; the sighing of the breeze ;
Who has not felt upon his heart a chill,
Deep in a forest, hearing sounds like these ?
Yet, Life is but a woodland, vast and still,
And Death an owl that flutters 'mid its trees.

XXI.

AMBITION.

YE who with hollow cheeks and faces pale,
And studious foreheads furrow'd o'er with care,
Forsake the low and level thoroughfare
To follow up ambition's mountain trail,
Be not o'er-quick to hurry; woes assail,
And unexpected danger and despair,
Await the pilgrim as he ventures there,
Where few succeed and countless hundreds fail.
Be not o'er-fast to travel; take your time,
For hard and toilsome is the steep to climb,
And oft misfortunes come, like birds of prey,
With monstrous wings extended, talons bent,
They seize our tender nestlings of content,
And scatter all their rosy plumes away!

XXII.

LIFE.

ALBEIT mine eyes no goodly prospects cheer,
And Life, so far as I can understand,
Seems but a dismal waste of barren land,
Where no sweet harvests thrive, no flowers appear ;
Yet in the desert must we sojourn here,
Building our pyramids upon the sand,
Tho' lone and limitless, on every hand,
The devastation stretches, bleak and drear.
So looks the Sphinx in Egypt, staid and stern,
While at her foot for many a rood away,
The sultry tracts of scorch'd Sahara lie ;
Yet full and furious on her forehead burn,
Throughout the focal and the fervent day,
The splendid honors of the tropic sky !

XXIII.

KIPLING.

HAVE you read Kipling? Here is something new,
A book of charming chapters, novel, grand,
Breathing of India and the Orient land,—
Plain tales that teem with talent thro' and thro';
The traits, the habits of the suave Hindoo
Herein are shown; and vividly at hand,
You hear the music of the martial band,
And see the soldiers passing in review.
Have you read Kipling? You're aware of, then,
The exploits of those lusty Musketeers;
The taking of the town of Lung-tung-pen;
The scourge of cholera, and the station's fears;
And Lispeth's sorrow in her dotage, when
She told the love-tale of her early years.

XXIV.

“ANOTHER STORY.”

HAVE you read Kipling? There was once a Lad,
A brilliant Boy, who, much to his dismay,
Was sent to India, and I grieve to say,
Was parted from the only Girl he had.
He heard the Ocean as it murmured mad,
And hoped to welcome, at no distant day,
His little Love from England, far away,
Whom he loved dearly, tho' his Heart was sad.
Torn from her Arms, with many a parting Kiss,
He could not deem her otherwise than True,
Until she wrote him and she told him this :
“Gone with a Man that's Handsomer than You;”
He never argued 't was a lucky miss,
But took it hard. Which no Man ought to do.

XXV.

REVERIES.

I THINK no one is half so blest as I,—
I dream always of babbling brooks that pass,
Green margin'd by the flower-studded grass,
And rippled as of soft winds blowing by !
White clouds o'erhead seem drifting lazily ;
The lull'd air fill'd with sweet birds' jargonings,
And sudden flashes of their sunlit wings
Against the azure reach of summer sky.
I'm half inclin'd to whisper you the reason,
Such May-day fancies hover o'er me, sweet,
So woefully, you'll warrant, out of season,
For snowflakes dance to earth with fairy feet ;
'Tis bitter cold, yet reveries to me bring
The day we'll marry, dearest, in the Spring.

XXVI.

DEATH.

WHY need'st thou shudder with dejected air,
And blanch with craven pallor of affright,
To take thy final leave of life and light,
And for the silent pilgrimage prepare ?
When death upon thee, stealing unaware,
Comes as a thief comes, in the noiseless night,
Be thou but ready and 't will all wax right,
'T is but a respite from vexatious care !
Go, thou ; and by the fagot-light of trust,
Seek thy repose, altho' thy couch be dust ;
Tho' o'er thy head the charnel grasses sway ;
The winding-sheet enfold thee ; and thy form
Be served to supper the ignoble worm ;
Sweet shalt thou slumber 'neath the spaded clay !

XXVII.

EVENING.

I TURN full pagan at the day's decline,
And worship the down-dropping sun's sweet rays ;
And in the deep'ning glow my spirit pays
Its warm devotion at the twilight's shrine.
Oh, but the dusk is wondrously divine ;
Like berries gleaming out of darken'd boughs,
The bright stars globe on Heaven's skyey brows,
And night brims over with the moon's pale wine !
Then seem I like those Mussulmans of eld,
Who, casting over skies their yearning gaze,
The waving palms of Paradise beheld,
With fruits bediamonding their verdurous sprays ;
I bow to the still earth, and my heart, impell'd
By faith like theirs, pours also forth its praise !

XXVIII.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

A SPIKE into our dear Lord's side was thrust
 (When crucified, He groaned on Calvary,
 That you and I from sin might purchas'd be),
Spilling His precious blood upon the dust.
Then roll'd aghast the horror-stricken main,
 And hoary mountains shook from peak to base ;
 Within a cloud, the sham'd sun hid his face,
And lo ! the temple's vail was rent in twain.
O strong resolve upon that cruel Tree,
 To suffer and to perish thus for Man !
Stifling within Him His divinity,
 Co-eval with eternity's wide span,
He bow'd his bless-ed head to God's decree,
 And finished on the cross Redemption's plan.

XXIX.

FATE.

AT Strophadean isles, amid Ionia's sea,
There dwelt two daughters of the Ocean God,
Fair-hair'd and wing-ed, who in Hesiod,
Are call'd Aello and Ocypete.
You may have heard what sorrow and hardship
They heap'd on blind Phineas, thick and fast,
And, ever as he sat at the repast,
They snatch'd the morsels from his starving lip.
Tho' they be mythical — there is a fate,
Which thus denies us fortune's fairest flowers;
And when we'd pluck them, doth anticipate
The fond design and baffle it always;
Cropping the sweetest we believed were ours,
With ruthless hand before our ravag'd gaze.

XXX.

MARCARIA.

I LOVE Marcaria, and when I said :
 “Caress me, love, I yearn to be caress'd,
 Yearn to be folded to thy loving breast,”
She only tossed contemptuously her head.
I might have pined away, uncomforted ;
 But that it chanc'd I spake in sorrow's tone :
 “Would I had died ere ever I had known
Thy love for me, Marcaria, was dead.”
Then she caress'd me to my heart's content,
 And solaced me with kisses numberless,
Till thro' my soul a blissful comfort went,
 And there was joy where darken'd once distress ;
So I remain an injured innocent,
 The hurt recipient of Love's fond redress.

XXXI.

MANSIONS BEAUTIFUL.

HOW beautiful are Thy dwellings in the sky,
Whose shining portals stand for us asunder,
O Thou who sittest in the volley'd thunder,
And at whose feet the vivid lightnings fly !
Like one who once in Patmos did descry
Thy city, rapt with 'wilderment and wonder,
So may we, compass'd in the darkness under,
By faith, behold Thy palaces on high.
Scant is our vision, bound by earthly ties ;
Wedded to flesh, our spirits scarce can see ;
But oh ! , to one just mounted to the skies —
Some ransom'd soul that's newly been set free —
To its new-open'd and anointed eyes,
How beautiful those mansions, Lord, must be !

XXXII.

CONQUEST.

NOW the shrill clarion of the katydid
Trills with a weird persistence, never done,
And day has groped with faltering steps amid
The failing honors of the sinking sun ;
Shade upon shade, night's majesty is won
From wide, environing scopes of cloud-wreathed sky,
Whose wild and matchless splendors are begun,
Like fading embers, to dissolve and die.
Soon the red stars their spectral lamps shall burn ;
The sullen moon drift grimly on the view ;
And darkness spread her raven pennons stern,
And night's rich conquest be achieved anew ;
While evening empties from her sable urn
The dead day's ashes, in the dusk and dew.

XXXIII.

PAUL AND VIRGINIA.

SLEEP will not visit me to-night, at all ;
I ask in vain her drowsy, fond embrace,
Implore in vain the homage of her grace,
No kindly dew upon mine eyes will fall.
I turn and watch upon my chamber wall
Two shapes that haunt a woodland's flowery space,
One wears Virginia's beautiful young face,
And one the youthful lineaments of Paul.
I can not chase the vision from mine eyes,
Nor shut these hapless creatures from my sight,
Who so beguile my sorrow and my tears,
Who so enlist my sympathy and sighs,
For I was reading in a book, to-night,
That sweet, pathetic story of St. Pierre's.

XXXIV.

“BE NOT AFRAID.”

THE angel at the sepulchre, descried
By those who thither fared, was heard to speak
These blessed words: “Be not afraid; ye seek
Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified;”
So shall the souls that turn from sin aside,
Needy and heavy-laden ones and weak,
Sustained and solaced be by voices meek,
Which comfort those who make His cross their guide.
Such, at His feet, shall favor sure obtain,
Howe’er the wicked scoff, the godless rail;
Eternal peace shall in their bosoms reign,
And mercy’s cup for them will never fail;
Great is their priceless, their immortal gain,
Who in their path the living Savior hail.

AN INDIAN LEGEND.

GAINING by sinuous paths the frowning height,
Thro' wildwoods fragrant with the breath of May,
I see below me in the morning light,
The landscape stretch away.

My step along the echoing bowlders rings ;
Some lone bird flutters from its dim retreat ;
Some black bats scatter, with bewildered wings,
At my approaching feet.

Sharp bits of chiseled flint-rock strew the ground,
Old arrow-heads—I hardly know their name—
No more to whistle at the bow's rebound,
True to the archer's aim.

From ferny fissures springing in the breeze,
Wild roses rustle with their wealth of bloom,
Shedding from rifled blossoms, prized by bees,
Wafts of their faint perfume.

An Indian Legend.

Along the slant a swimming vapor furls,
Clings like a thin cloud in the silvery sky,
Till lightly shaken into airy curls,
A zephyr sweeps it by.

Here, when the solemn midnight waves her wand,
Two Indian shades appear, with flowing locks —
A maiden and her lover, hand in hand,
Glide o'er the moonlit rocks;

Glide up the rugged steep, from cleft to cleft,
Their light feet glimpsing under streaming stoles,
And where they step, the gemmeous footprints left
Glow, like ignescent coals !

The hawk forsakes its nest with clamorous flight ;
Fleet hares go springing down the winding way ;
A copperhead uncoils in sheer affright,
And slips beneath a spray.

The aged and garrulous pioneer who dwells
Where yon blue wreaths of towering smoke arise,
To the sweet children of his household tells
The legend in this wise :

An Indian Legend.

In days before the white intruder came,
A Shawnee girl, the floweret of her tribe,
Felt the strange wine of love suffuse her frame
And her whole soul imbibe.

But dark the deadly draught was mixed with woe !
Her heart from its belov'd was sundered wide,
And, all the hope she cherished thus laid low,
She droop'd at length, and died ;

Just as the flow'rets in their beauty fade —
The fresh young blue-bell by the jaunty rill,
And the meek violet in the woodland shade,
The aster on the hill !

They made beneath this bluff her narrow grave,
Where, rippling by the rocks, the brooklet sings,
And the cool ferns and water lilies wave,
And wild birds wet their wings.

Then, ere the forest doff'd its green array,
He who convoked her sad, untimely fate,
Threw, in a distant war, his life away —
The wrong to expiate.

An Indian Legend.

The new moon framed on high its radiant arch,
When on rude bier, draped with a panther's hide,
His mangled corse was borne with solemn march
And buried by her side.

Tho' many a season has advanced since then,
And many a moon has waxed and waned away,
And in their stead a mightier race of men
Holds undisputed sway,

From happy hunting-grounds, thro' which they range,
They still return, at noiseless dead of night,
The sweets of ardent pledges to exchange
On this eternal height!

A NIGHT'S DREAM.

I DREAMED we sat together, as we used to long ago,
When the early dews were falling and the sinking
sun was low,
In an arbour, dim and shaded, where a mocking-bird
apart,
Was singing a sonata from the bottom of his heart.
A tawny tiger lily, that was blooming in a vase,
Its fragrant tribute offered as the zephyr swept the
place;
And the moon upon the mountain shed her lustre o'er
the land,
Till the night was like a virgin with a lamp within her
hand.
We saw the bright pomegranate, as it glistened in the
shine
Of the pearly evening planet, and we smelt the trumpet-
vine
As it clambered all about us, and we caught the cheery
sound
As the little crickets carol'd 'neath the roses on the
ground.

A Night's Dream.

'T was in no fairy country — no region vague or blurred —
Nor far Arcadian pasture where the pipes of Pan are heard,
But in the dreamy Southland where the oleanders grow,
I was talking to my sweetheart as I used to long ago.
Her slender form was folded in the hollow of my arm;
Her voice was soft and gentle and it held me like a charm,
While the songster in a revelry of music all along
In the arbour woke the echoes of a carnival of song.
Her little hand was lying, like a lily in my own,
The gem upon her finger in the yellow moonlight shone,
Outrivalled by the splendor of the smile upon her face,
As she nestled down demurely in the warmth of my
embrace.

Yet all that I was dreaming — I regretted when I rose —
Was but a fabrication of the wizard of repose;
A beautiful invention that was never meant to stay,
But to vanish like the dew-drops when the night should
steal away.

Ah, if indeed, we wandered, as we often used to do,
In the dreamy Southern arbour where the oleanders grew,
And the mocking-birds were singing, and with moonlight
on the land,

I wonder what she'd answer if I asked her for her hand?

A Night's Dream.

Tho' the hope be more delusive than a jack-o-lantern's
gleam,

Tho' there's nothing so uncertain as a sweetheart or a
dream,

Still, my life would be so happy, and my heart would be
so light,

If only in the harbour we could meet again to-night.

THE FLOWER GIRL.

IT does not seem like Spring to me,
Tho' bebies of white daisies fly
All idly o'er the grassy lea,
Beneath the smiling sky.

My cattle browse in leafy woods,
Where golden sunlight, leaning fair,
Bids nascent lilacs cleave their buds,
And lay their bosoms bare.

And breadths of lilies bridge the stream
On which the oreads used to cross;
And by the dewy margins gleam
The odorous mint and moss.

And yet, somehow, I know not why,
'Mid all this bright and blossoming store,
I bow my hapless head and sigh,
"It will be Spring no more."

The Flower Girl.

'T is, maybe, I no longer meet,
By stream or stile, at morning hours,
In rain or shine, the maiden sweet,
Who used to gather flowers.

Oh, but her coming footfalls were
The sign and signal over earth
For all bright, fragile things like her
To burst in beauty forth.

The prescient flowers beat quick at heart ;
The birds sang welcome when she came ;
And through my veins, with quivering start,
There burnt a holy flame.

She roamed with basket neatly lined
With cool, lush ferns and sifted mold,
All heaped with blossoms choice, and twined
With wreaths of marigold.

Oft thus I've met her in the dale,
Or on the upland would she be ;
I thought the flowers were not so frail,
Nor beautiful as she.

The Flower Girl.

Too frail ; for, as the shining web
 Floats leeward, loosened from its spray,
On the flower-tide, in its last ebb,
 Her soul was borne away.

And so it does not seem like Spring,
 Tho' balmy airs about me throng,
And warblers wanton on the wing,
 In ecstasy of song.

And yet I know her gentle hand —
 By perfect grace immortal made —
Now gathers in a fairer land
 The blooms that never fade.

FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

IN Bagdad once, in good Al Hassan's day,
The Princess Hilda, by a genie's power,
Was from her palace spirited away,
And forced to languish in a distant tower.

There, all forlorn, behind the prison grate,
Her eyes dropped pearls of anguish and despair,
As if their weeping could reverse her fate,
Or tears could soften her impassioned care.

She wrung with ceaseless moan her shackeled hands,
And pressed her face against the cruel bars ;
She heard the clanking of her iron bands,
And watched the throbbing of the silent stars.

As thus, one eve, a longing look she cast,
What time the moon besilvered all the sky,
Along the road to Bagdad leading past,
She saw the plum'd Abdallah riding by.

From The Arabian Nights.

Then with a voice by gathering hope imbued,
And by resistless sorrow rendered strong,
His succor in her woeful plight she sued,
And told him all the story of her wrong.

The Sheik approached, and first, by Allah's grace,
And next, by all his holy creed, he swore
That ne'er did beauty wear so sad a face,
Or grief assume so fair a guise before.

“And tho' in the endeavor I should die,
And mix with dust dishonored, on my word,
Before to-morrow's sun shall mount the sky,
I'll scale the rampart and uncage the bird.”

O potent speech! for by the prophet's beard,
Altho' a greater marvel ne'er could be,
The charm was snapt—the prison disappeared,
And lo, the captive stood before him free!

So much a kind and generous action thrives,
These two were wed, and here my tale must cease.
They led becoming and exemplary lives,
And died, like all good Mussulmans, in peace.

A MINSTREL'S SONG IN OSSIAN.

“O SING the sweet song over,” said Utha’s bursting
sigh ;

“Did the mighty fall in battle, and did Crimora die ?”
The minstrel saw a glistening tear bedew the virgin’s eye.

’Twas at Cathulla’s Feast of Shells, where Fingal once
delayed,
The harper on his trembling strings a plaintive air had
played,
A song of love and valor that had charmed the listening
maid.

Once more his softly trembling harp, the bard, obedient,
strung ;
Once more the tender ditty in a pleasing voice he sung,
Once more the maid attentive, on the theme enchanted
hung.

He sang of fair Crimora ; of Connal, her adored.
When over Morven’s flowery field the tide of battle
poured,
How the insolent invader felt the vengeance of his sword.

A Minstrel's Song in Ossian.

And she so fond and beautiful, the fairest of the fair,
She masked herself in armor that he might not know her
there,

And with her youth beloved, to the conflict did repair.

Her golden locks streamed far behind; her supple bow
was strong.

She turned the barb against the foe; she loosed the
sounding thong;

Oh, false the erring arrow sped, and wildly it went wrong!

It pierced her lover's side; he fell, as falls upon the plain
The oak beneath the woodman's axe, that ne'er shall rise
again;

And all the day and all the night she groaned with grief
and pain.

But what can dry the mourner's tears, or what can soothe
her sighs?

She withers like the lily; like the drooping rose she dies;
Their mingled dust, beneath a stone, by Carric-thura lies.

"Sleep softly," gentle Utha said, "by Lotha's winding rills,
For there the earth incloses, beneath the daffodils,
The loveliest pair of lovers that ever roamed our hills."

THE DESOLATION AT BAL-CLUTHA.

BAL-CLUTHA, all fallen thy towers,
In the charm of confusion are strown ;
The thistles spring up and the flowers,
And the moss creeps over each stone.
In the riot of reveling hours,
Thou wearest of triumph the smile,
Tho' the winds and the pestilent showers,
All darkly thy columns defile.

Crumble, crumble, ancient castle ;
Tempests wrestle
With thy towers ;
Where thy hoary turrets tumble,
Sweet shall bloom the jasmine flowers.

The eglantine lovingly muffles,
With blossoms thy stanch colonnades ;
The debris of fallen walls ruffles
The brook which thy balcony shades.

The Desolation at Bal-Clutha.

I hear the wild fox as she scuffles

With her frolicsome young at their sports,
And the wind as it mournfully shuffles

Thro' thine empty and desolate courts.

Ramble, ramble, wind that whistles,
Thro' the thistles

Draped with vines,
Where the serpent wraps the bramble,
And the swarthy lizard shines.

The ominous croak of the raven

Resounds, and the screech of the owl;
The ghost of a monk, gaunt and shaven,
With visage concealed by a cowl,
Floats shudderingly by, like a craven,
Up-borne on the loitering gale;
And beyond, from their niches in heaven,
The stars, thro' his body, burn pale.

Sparkle, sparkle, star that nightly
Scatters brightly

Thy mild ray;
Tho' this massive ruin darkle,
Thou shalt never know decay.

The Desolation at Bal-Clutha.

O fallen, O desolate palace,
Where moss creeps over each stone ;
Where thistles spring up in their malice ;
Where roses are mockingly blown ;
Ruin plieth his trade, stern and callous,
The rime on thy hearth thickens hoar ;
The foxes look out through the trellis ;
The ravens fly in at the door.

Faintly, faintly, I undaunted,
With the haunted
Night commune ;
Sweeping from my viol quaintly,
Ballads to the broken moon.

OSSIAN'S ELEGY ON FINGAL, THE FALLEN.

YE who shall pass this simple headstone by,
In honor pause, nor idly turn away ;
Beneath this turf his hallowed ashes lie
Who was, in life, his country's chiefest stay.

His was the hand that shot the deadliest dart
That ever stretched a foeman on the plain ;
His was the softest and the kindest heart
That ever sought to soothe a comrade's pain.

By fear nor favor from his purpose swerved —
Swayed by no motive but the love of right —
Thro' many a long and bloody war he served,
And came triumphant out of every fight.

He was the champion of the weak and wronged ;
The yeoman's help, the bondman's friend was he ;
A thousand clansmen at his summons thronged,
And loyal courtiers bent the duteous knee.

Ossian's Elegy on Fingal, the Fallen.

No coveter of station, power or place,
 He shaped his empire to colossal size;
And, with his native and accustomed grace,
 Beheld the fabric of his fame arise.

But like some column of immense design,
 That, shattered, lies upon the level clay,
So, stretched in death upon the turf supine,
 On Crona's field the mangled monarch lay.

As fades the floweret in its loveliest prime;
 As breaks the pitcher at the flowing well;
As parts the pillar in its might sublime;
 As falls the tower in its strength, he fell.

And long his country shall lament his fate,
 The while her heart with poignant anguish bleeds;
Shall long the virtues of his life relate;
 Shall long remember and recount his deeds.

Then rest thee ever where the cedars grow,
 To type thy glory and attest our grief;
And while thou liest 'neath the verdure low,
 Soft be thy slumbers — thou illustrious chief.

TIME AND GRIEF.

'TIS said that Time for every grief
A pure and precious balm imparts,
Whose grateful virtues of relief
Steal sweetly thro' our aching hearts.

'Tis sorrow's coinage; they who cope
With her, the empty solace prize;
It serves to spread a flower of hope,
And bends an iris o'er their skies.

'Tis sweet on misery's brink to hear,
While wildly dark our ills betide —
The still, small whisper in the ear —
Which bids our trembling fears subside.

But little heed the flattering voice,
And trust no hope, however fair;
Unteach thy bosom to rejoice,
And thou can'st sorrow firmer bear.

Time and Grief.

Hast thou a wish? Thy wish is vain;
Thine agony shall keener grow;
Time never neutralizes pain,
Nor cools the fevered lips of woe.

But using oft a pliant tone,
He feigns compassion's soft degree,
That when our hearts again are strown,
Their wrecks may all the richer be.

And tho' this truth thou may'st contemn,
Thine own experience yet shall find
That joy was formed a transient gem,
But grief perpetual was designed.

Go, fling thy sorrows to the gales,
They are not gone; they still are rife;
Thy breast with every breath inhales
Their rancor back into thy life.

Like those who read on morning's sky,
By signs her azure depths display,
What clouds shall tumult rock on high,
How dark a night succeed the day;

Time and Grief.

Even thus on Time's eternal front,
We view thro' unavailing tears,
What must be borne of sorrow's brunt,
Unsuccored by the flying years ;

And know the only balm for care
Must drip from death's benignant cloud,
And curdling in the veins, prepare
The clay-cold sleeper for the shroud.

PERFECT PEACE.

NOW in my heart hath sorrow pressed
The thorn that fills my soul with gloom ;
And vainly since I sigh for rest,
Oh, let me joyless seek the tomb.

'Tis sweet to think some flowers there
Shall wave in zephyr's gentle breath,
And sods their verdurous mantles wear
Above my narrow house of death.

But may no storied marble deck
The silent place with pompous show ;
I would not alien eyes should reck
What dust is sepulchered below.

Enough that perfect peace shall brood,
Oblivion shade her rayless eye,
And silence, in her stillest mood,
Compress her pallid lips and die.

Perfect Peace.

Such would, to e'en the last degree,
For ills, through which in life I've pressed,
An ample reparation be—
The prefix to eternal rest.

Then ope the grave, for only there
May hearts disrobe of rue and sin ;
Earth grants no refuge elsewhere,
But offers plenteous room within.

Would'st thou from her embrace recoil,
Since both with kindred clay are rife ?
Thou potter's crock, wherein doth boil,
At passion's heat, the ichor, Life.

The flame hath scorched thee ; thou are rent,
Thy being's liquor leaked away ;
Now be thy brilliant fragments blent
With grosser particles of clay.

They do not deem their fate severe
Who sweetly sleep from anguish free ;
Who banished from their troubles here,
Are blest, no matter where they be.

Perfect Peace.

For, 'neath the fond earth's sheltering weight
Reposing, all their sorrows past,
The lilies of a goodly fate
Have come and covered them at last.

A Persian sentence, soft and brief —
The sweetest ever dwelt on breath —
Declares, when sorely stung with grief,
Our truest, tenderest friend is Death.

A LYRIC OF THE HAZEL-NUT PATCH.

I.

A PLEASANT sort of pastime, when the Autumn
comes around,

Is to roam the hills and hollows where the hazel-nuts
abound.

The blossom time is over and the wren has taken wing,
And the jay, alone remaining, has the hardihood to sing.
No other sound of cheerfulness is audible about —

The Autumn comes in triumph, with her sombre banners out;
She crops the mighty forest with her devastating shears,
And every thing is gloomy, when the hazel-nut appears;
Yet merrily and cheerily, with baskets we may wend
Our way into the woodland, where the hazel bushes bend.

II.

My blessings on the hazel bush that never grew so high
As to waste its screen of leafage, like the oak tree, on
the sky.

Nor yet as dwarfed and stunted as the vine against the earth,
Whose growth of leafy thickness forms a veil of little worth;

A Lyric of the Hazel-nut Patch.

The hazel, like a conscious bush, by intuition grew
The proper height and thickness to seclude us from the
view ;

As if it felt when Autumn came, with all her locks aflow
Every maiden would be coming with a basket and a beau ;
That merrily and cheerily, in couples they would wend
Their way into the woodland, where the hazel bushes
bend.

III.

When the hull is sere and tawny, and the nut is dry and
brown,

And beneath its gracious burden every twig is laden down,
And yields upon the slightest touch its treasures by the
batch,

We feel as we were welcome to the finest in the patch.
The rabbit scampers from our path, his flying bounds
are heard ;

A covey of young partridges salutes the mother bird ;
She answers from a neighboring shrub, but watch her as
we may,

Unwitnessed of our alien eyes, she'll slip the brood away ;
And merrily and cheerily we'll hear her notes ascend
Far off, amid the woodland, where the hazel bushes bend.

A Lyric of the Hazel-nut Patch.

IV.

And when at eve, the rising moon emits a mellow glow,
And our hazel-nuts are gathered, and it's time for us to
go;

And the cooling dews are falling; and the clanking bells
we hear

Of the cattle, winding homeward, thro' the gloaming still
and clear —

We rest ourselves a little, and we gather up our load,
And with a sense of gratitude, we journey on the road,
And think of all the Winter nights, the blazing fire about,
When we'll crack the nuts upon the hearth and pluck the
kernels out.

Thus merrily and cheerily, contentedly we wend
Our way from out the woodland, where the hazel bushes
bend.

REQUIEM.

IN many a wild, fantastic wreath the pliant ivies revel ;
In vernal sheen their tendrils green enwrap her
narrow mound,
And rude the riot-loving winds their verdurous folds
dishevel ;
And bend the graceful lilies prone upon the dewy
ground.

Within a shady forest nook, where morning's crystal
splendor
Slants long and slim thro' branches dim, like javelins
of gold ;
And where the evening's sombre dyes, mysterious and
tender,
Commingle in the darkening wood with shadows
manifold ;

She sleeps, beneath the fragrant turf, the cold and
dreamless slumber ;
Nor e'er again shall waken fain to my impassioned
plea,

Requiem.

Tho' thence should my pathetic sighs be wafted without
number,

And o'er the green grass of her grave my sad tears
sprinkled be.

Perhaps beneath the pearly moon, from odorous recesses
The lissome bands of fairylands convene about the place,
Tearing with woeful wailing their amaranthine tresses —
She was their only lineal kin of all our mortal race.

Hers was the beauty undivined, which is alone created
Out of the trill of a rippling rill, with every happy
trait,
In witching fairy realms remote, and magically translated
To mortal form and feature from the invisible fairy-state.

Time had dispatched, with wingéd speed, since this event
transpiring,
Evoked her birth and blessed the earth with her in
blossom-wise,
A score of flowery Summers on their blissful missions,
firing
Sweet passion's vestal ardor in her splendid twilight
eyes.

Requiem.

She bore a close resemblance in her willowy form and
features

To the airy, delicate, fairy-folk that daintily exist
In elfin lore and legend as wee, gleesome-hearted
creatures,

Who keep beneath the brionied oak, the happy,
moonlit tryst.

Full dark were her enamoring eyes as is the pansy's
splendor,

But oh, the bright, entrancing light their ardent glance
bestowed ;

And they burned with soft, subdued desire, immaculate
and tender,

Wherein, like jewels 'neath the tide, her sweet thoughts
fairly glowed.

We always were inseparable, and where the herons waded,
Thro' reed and vine, with dew's ashine, we wandered
hand in hand ;

And hand in hand we lingered where the rippling stream
was shaded,

And gathered shining lilies from the fern-enameled
strand.

Requiem.

At lucent noon, or dewy eve, we twain were aye together ;
We saw thro' Orient gates of dawn the morning
splendors start,
In the soft, prolific blossom-time, or fruitful Autumn
weather ;
And when the Winter wrapped the wold, we twain
were not apart.

But cold upon the senseless earth the passive lily falleth,
And other blooms the sod entombs, as beautiful and
gay.

The flowers of human pattern when the dread despoiler
calleth,
In all their reigning pride of bloom as silent pass
away.

Oh, sweet to my expectant heart was love's divine
beginning ;
Propitious gleamed the star I dreamed would lead
triumphant on ;
But in the midst of my delight, such matchless beauty
winning,
Lo, darkness quenched its fickle beam and all my joy
was gone.

Requiem.

But still the vision gleams apace, tho' shadowy and
meager —

Too fond to be revealed entire to unanointed eyes ;
And lo! my lonesome spirit waits the summons, keen
and eager,

To clasp her angel semblance 'neath the palms of
Paradise.

THE PHANTOM LIGHTHOUSE.

I KNOW not where, but many leagues from land,
One stormy night, our valiant ship was tossed;
Loud called the tempest, and on every hand,
The challenged waters gave the pass-word, "Lost!"

The struggling moon broke out at times, and beamed,
Till strangled black by clouds which swiftly drave,
And all the sea with writhing demons teemed
That urged to utmost fury wind and wave.

Our sails swelled full, and good it was to see
How nobly to her course the vessel clung;
Sun-swart and trusty mariners were we
As ever into whistling rigging sprung.

Full swelled our sails—a lovely sight to view—
As in the wind we scudded fast and free,
Lithe-limbed and hardy was our gallant crew,
As e'er in vessel ventured down to sea.

The Phantom Lighthouse.

Off port nor starboard beam — ahead, astern —

No sign of passing canvas could we mark;

Far as my straining vision could discern,

A waste of waters desolate and dark.

We drank our grog, blithe-hearted, to the toast :

“Long live the skipper; luck attend the mate;”

Made merry we o’er scowling ocean’s boast,

And dared the vengeful powers that nursed our fate.

There was a time when decked with pennons proud,

Serene we split the harbor’s placid tide;

But on that night the tempest menaced loud,

And leagues of torn seas threatened far and wide.

I leaned me o’er the bulwark long, when lo!

Broke bright across the waves a scarlet light;

I raised a shout of gladness: “Lighthouse, ho!”

Which all the crew resounded with their might.

And then we manned the gear; quick to obey

Our will, the good ship on her new course sped

Swift, while the yelling demons dashed the spray,

Straight for the beacon light that flared ahead.

The Phantom Lighthouse.

I think of it, and ghastly I grow pale
 To think such direful thing should come to pass ;
An hour we beat before the raging gale,
 But ere another had elapsed, alas !

While yet we marked, o'erjoyed, the lighthouse loom,
 And ready made to anchor safe our craft,
A noise we harkened, like the crack of doom,
 The light went out and all the demons laughed.

And then we felt an awful shock amain ;
 The trembling decks gave way ; the ocean tossed ;
Some cried, " God save us ; " others swore profane,
 The heaving sea laconic answered, " Lost ! "

I know no more ; my locks are white and thin,
 But in my ears, wherever I may be,
There rings forever the alluring din
 Of stormy billows surging wild and free.

A MOSAIC FROM THE PSALMS.

UPON the harp, with solemn chord,
Oh, suffer me to praise the Lord!
He walks upon the tempest's wing,
And from His tread the lightnings spring;
His chariot is the clouds that fly
In majesty across the sky;
The mighty floods His voice obey,
And haste at His rebuke away;
Exalt His glories, O my soul—
His honors to the world extol.

Lord, what is man that Thou shouldst be
Compassionate to such as he?
Didst Thou not send Thy spirit forth,
What were his frail existence worth?
He'd nightly bathe his bed with tears,
And languish through unhappy years;
But Thou, from Thine almighty palm
Hast pour'd salvation's soothing balm.
The theme is charming to my heart
To sing how great, how good Thou art.

A Mosaic from the Psalms.

Our God is Love; both woe and weal
His sweet benevolence reveal;
Such amplitude of grace He hath
He guides our feet from trouble's path,
By tranquil waters, when, in truth,
We merit everlasting ruth.
Change not Thine equity to ire
When justice calls for vengeance dire,
But still, O gracious Sovereign, be
The Rock to which we all may flee.

Soothed, solac'd; by Thy saving power,
I call upon Thee every hour.
Thy loving kindness will I speak
Till death shall blanch my fevered cheek;
Shall quench the lustre of mine eye
That, prayerful, turns to Thee, on high.
When in impenetrable shade,
This suffering clay is senseless laid,
Then shall my soul, exulting, soar,
And learn to love and praise Thee more!

THE GOLDEN ROD.

THEY flourish on the uplands high,
And in the valleys low ;
In marshy places and in dry,
In myriads they grow ;
On many a soft and saffron stalk
They beautify the sod.
No matter where we chance to walk
We find the golden rod.

When Autumn, crown'd with yellow weeds,
And wreathed with garlands gay,
In blissful indolence proceeds
Along her languid way ;
Where'er she steps, her foot enchants
The ground whereon she treads,
And hosts of slender, spiral plants
Uplift their regal heads.

How bright they glisten when the gleam
Of morning on them lies ;
How rare and beautiful they seem,
Array'd in splendid guise ;

The Golden Rod.

Not Solomon, in his select
And pompous robes of power,
Was half so gorgeously bedecked
As this imperial flower.

The rose is lovely when the dew
Shines on her pearly breast ;
And lovely is the lily, too,
In subtle vesture dress'd ;
The daisy looks so meek and chaste,
Outpeeping from the sod —
But first and foremost to my taste
I like the golden rod.

When frost descends, and breezes fan
The woods, no longer green,
And all around the eye may scan
The stript, Autumnal scene :
When, far and wide, on every tree
The lingering leaflets fade,
The golden rod we still may see
In loveliest tints array'd.

The Golden Rod.

And bright and brighter every day

It shines serenely out,

While flowers that once were fresh and gay

Are dying all about.

Thus may we, too, when pleasures wane —

In sorrow's gloomy hour —

To greater loveliness attain,

Like this perennial flower.

COME, FILL UP THE PIPE.

COME, fill up the pipe ; there is joy in the fume,
There never were comforts the equal of these —
To sit in the midst of the smoke in the room,
And loosen your fancy and puff at your ease.
With a sack of tobacco in reach of your hand,
The scent of the burning weed filling the air,
Life takes on a color that's rosy and bland,
For the pipe, like a talisman, charms away care.

Come, strike us a match ; as the sulphur ignites
With a sputter and spurt of its delicate fire,
How cheerful the glow of a match when it lights,
And the flames that enwreath it rise rosily higher :
A touch to the pipe, and a draw, and it's lit ;
You sink in the indolent ease of your chair,
And say, as you swoon to the glory of it,
That the pipe, like a talisman, charms away care.

Come, Fill Up the Pipe.

'Twas sweet to count o'er the fond joys of the glass,
When the wine in its crystal depths lent it a hue ;
Or to reckon the rapture of loving a lass,
When the moments on pinions of happiness flew ;
But wine is a mocker and woman is frail,
The pleasure of either's a cheat and a snare ;
But here is a solace that never will fail,
For the pipe, like a talisman, charms away care.

Come hither, old smoker-folk, grave and austere,
I, too, am a votary, fond of the weed ;
And, bringing your pipes, you have nothing to fear ;
I give you my hand — we are brethren indeed ;
Let us bravely endure the rude world and its shocks,
And when life's latest spark shall go out — in the end,
Like the last and the only match left in the box,
Our souls, like the smoke of our pipes, shall ascend.

BEAUTY IN DECAY.

DO not poets always say,
"Things are fairest in decay?"
What is lovelier than the sinking sun at golden close
of day!
With its soft vermilion dyes,
Waning from the darkling skies,
Freshly fair may be the morning,
Fair the noontide, but the day
Wears its loveliest adorning
Just before it fades away.

Look where fragile lilies lying
Shredded from their stems are dying,
And where blooms that decked the branches in the
withering winds are flying;
And where heavy roses tossed,
Languish with the blight of frost,
Are they not, as if a herald,
Warns them that decay is nigh,
In their brightest hues appareled,
Just before they droop and die?

Beauty in Decay.

Oh, that it might sometime be
Truly said of you and me,
That our spirits grew in beauty as we neared the
 unknown sea ;
That we passed from life away,
Quietly as the fading day ;
 From the sins released which bound us,
 All our merits at their best,
Robes of righteousness around us,
 Just before we sank to rest.

GIANTS.

WE all must bear the battle's brunt,
And have Goliaths to confront;
Boast as we may, we meet at length
The giant that defies our strength;
Some huge despair, some bulky rue,
Which we must combat and subdue,
Like him, who fearless went alone,
And slew Goliath with a stone!

None may evade it; every path
Is menaced by a giant of Gath!
Tho' high on fortune's hill we pace,
Or be we moilers at the base,
All must descend into the vale,
And win the victory, or fail;
God help us who go forth alone
To front Goliath with a stone.

On Life's hard field, contending, when
Men turn oppressors unto men,
Thrice doth he triumph o'er his foes
Who mingles mercy with his blows;
And, armed to stand against a horde,
Wields but the weapons of the Lord;
A kindly look, a gentle tone,
Have slain Goliath like a stone!

TO MADISON CAWEIN.

Herein are blown from out the south,
Songs blithe as those of Pan's pursed mouth.

—James Whitcomb Riley.

WERE poesy's chrism on my lips distilled
And in her magic were I duly skilled,
It were a pleasing effort to rehearse
Your praises, poet, in my smoothest verse.
I would be stringing strands of pearly words
Sweet as the minstrelsy of morning birds,
And of the verses which I thus should frame
I'd shape a lyric to your splendid fame;
One that would ripple, with a mellow chime,
O'er shoals of rhythm and down banks of rhyme.

But far from me the fickle Muse has strayed,
Nor can I win again the golden maid
To light her frenzy in my joyless eyes;
Nor on the wings of fancy can I rise,
And, like a lark on fanning feathers strong,
Cleave the clear ether of the fields of song.
But 'twere in vain; a worthier pen than mine
Has paid its tribute to your lyre divine,

To Madison Cawein.

With apt allusions and with quaint conceits,
Fit to have glittered from the quill of Keats,
Has told how beautifully from out the South,
Your songs were wafted as "from Pan's pursed
mouth."

Fain would I fashion for your Muse's glory,
A song as blithesome and as laudatory ;
Fain in the language of my cordial heart
My admiration and esteem impart.
But when to poesy I feel inclined,
And flowery visions hover in my mind,
And I would write them ere they flit and fade,
My numbers stammer, and my pen's dismayed,
And, to my shame, my feeble verses stand
Cold and unlike the language I had planned.
Thus many a fine opinion, which I cherish
About your lovely verses needs must perish ;
Many a fancy which I fain would write,
Slips from the trammels of my phrases light,
And by the margin of my murmuring lay
Lingers a moment and is blurred away ;
Swift as a naiad, in her garlands fair,
Fades from a fountain and is lost in air.

To Madison Cawein.

Oft have I wondered in what halcyon clime,
Your fancy revels in its quest for rhyme ;
Whither your thoughts, like golden bees, may throng,
And sip the honey of immortal song ;
Oft have I marveled in what secret spot,
What Delphian cavern or Arcadian grot,
Rises, exhaustless as a mountain spring,
The inspiration of the songs you sing ;
Oft have I wondered from what source unknown
You gleaned the inklings of your "Gloramone" ;
In what far region, pure and undefiled,
"Lyanna" first upon your vision smiled ;
And where "Noera" with her "laughing, clear,
Loved voice of old," delighted first your ear.
Was it not, poet, in those blest domains,
Those hallowed realms, where heaven-born genius reigns,
And have you not, on many a happy flight,
Winged blissful visits to those bowers of light ?
The birds have seen you, and the wandering bees
Beheld you frequent on those fadeless leas,
And oft with trophies, in your gleaming hand,
Of flowers that blossom in no other land,
You've come with beauties that we deem so fair,
We count you worthy to have sojourned there.

FEAST OF SHELLS — FROM OSSIAN.

WHEN Fingal, from the wars victorious came,
The harps of Selma trembled with his fame,
Like sounds that thunder, and are heard no more,
On Crona's banks, the stubborn strife was o'er ;
Stilled was contention's noise ; the sandy plains
No longer red with battle's bloody stains,
Peace, like a seraph, from her hallowed hand,
Poured healing's ointment on the stricken land,
Soothed the distracted country, eased its throes,
Till full fruition blossom'd like the rose !

The lamps were trimmed, when eve in sombre guise,
Came darkly wandering o'er the russet skies,
The beam was spread, 'mid music's rapturous swells ;
In Ullin's halls, was set the feast of shells.
The guests arrived, with tumult of acclaim,
The clansmen gathered, and the courtiers came —
Shepherds and yeomen from their fields afar,
And chiefs assembled from the seats of war ;

Feast of Shells—from Ossian.

All, all were met, and every bosom burned
To welcome Fingal to his realms returned.
Up rose a minstrel, venerable and pale,
His words were valiant, tho' his limbs were frail ;
Him did the years in kindly reverence spare,
While snowed their winters in his hoary hair ;
Wise was his counsel, though his lips were wan,
And silence settled when his speech began.

“ Home from the North, from battle's mighty shocks,
The King hath come with all his heavy locks ;
Dark was his conflict with the heathen horde,
But sheathed in victory was his flashing sword ;
Now let the songs be raised, the choral sound
Reverberate these spacious walls around ;
Not the loud slogan, nor the anthem strong,
Nor stately metres of the martial song,
But sing some soft, some soul-subduing air
To soothe the monarch, and assuage his care.
When Winter ends and all his tempests hush,
Sweet is the warble of the vernal thrush.
So, after War's discordant clarions cease,
Sweet are the soothing melodies of peace.”

Feast of Shells—from Ossian.

Such were his words ; and, sudden, at the pause,
Peal after peal prolonged the loud applause,
Then woke from dallied wires a light refrain
As, after thunder, falls the tinkling rain
Mellow and soothing — straightway every tongue,
Commingling soft, a song of anguish sung —
A song of sorrow of the olden times,
Shrined by some minstrel in his plaintive rhymes,
A lay of woe, of true love come to grief,
The words were simple and the song was brief :

Asleep lies my hunter yonder
With moss on his burial stone ;
Alone through the woods I wander,
I wander the hills alone ;
And muse on a morn, when flurried
He kist my lips farewell,
And away to the wars he hurried,
Where slain in the ranks he fell ;
Gra'mercy ! my spirit is sorest
Of all that grief hath bewrayed,
Since I wander alone thro' the forest
Where my true love is laid.

Feast of Shells—from Ossian.

What shall I do, my hunter !
Since thou art cold in clay ?
Alone through the woods I saunter,
And sorrow the live-long day ;
Now hardly the lithe deer poises
His listening head, as I go ;
He dreads no more the noises
When redolent winds a-blow
Sweep through the foliage sighing,
Wail through the naked heath,
For thou in the wilderness lying,
Art pale in the sleep of death !

The king stood silent till the song was o'er,
And stillness lengthened on the scene once more ;
His softened gaze the vast assembly scanned,
The scepter trembled in his shaking hand ;
His head dropped forward and his massive crown
Was well-nigh toppled from its station down ;
The crowd look'd on, with wonder and surprise,
For tears were falling from the conqueror's eyes !

THE BATTLE — IN OSSIAN.

THERE where the roses reveled and the violets grew,
The warriors and the minstrels, crowding 'round,
With heavy hearts and solemn funeral songs,
Laid to their everlasting rest
The pallid relics of the mighty Chieftain.

All day the combat raged, and gathering night
Saw no cessation of the furious fight ;
Like mountain torrents, from their summits poured,
The crimson billows of contention roared ;
Steel clashed on steel, and radiantly around
The moon's fair lustre lit the sanguine ground.
From clouds emerging, like a shield of gold,
Serenely soft, the evening planet rolled,
Fringing the peaks that, darkly frowning, rose
With beams as vestal as their virgin snows,
She turned her rays, with mild effulgence rife,
Broad on that valley of tumultuous strife.
Appall'd and startled by the thunderous crash
The prowling foxes vanish'd like a flash ;
Flitting, as usual, thro' the moonlight gray,
The owlet burst, on frighten'd wings, away ;

The Battle—in Ossian.

And many a bat upon its passage wheel'd
And sped in terror from the dinsome field ;
While only one, War's ignominious bird,
The vulture, view'd the battle scene unstirr'd,
And, calmly gloating from his eyry high,
Craned his thin neck, and look'd with quiet eye.

For well he reckon'd, when the morning ray
Revealed the issue of that fearful fray,
Full many a corse, beneath the soaring sun
Would shrink and shrivel when the strife was done,
Their bleeding veins the thirsty turf should lave,
And splash the flowerets with their ruddy wave.
But never more should towering heights behold
Such floods of slaughter o'er the verdure roll'd,
Should never witness, on the blooming plain,
The flowers besprinkled with so red a rain,
And softly mantled in impassive snow,
Survey such carnage in the vale below.
For now was Fingal, with his clansmen brown,
Swoop'd like the eagle from the Highlands down,
Fresh from the triumphs of his northern raid,
With victory kindling on his trenchant blade,

The Battle—in Ossian.

By conquest dazzled, and impelled by fame,
His numbers swelling as he conquering came,
Here face to face, the craven foe he dared,
Arranged his legions and for strife prepared,
While Selma's welfare, on that fatal day,
Was staked and pendent on the final fray.

Who would have fancied, ere the morrow's sheen
Had softly twinkled on the dewy scene,
Ere dawn approached, or night was on the wane,
And day fell rosy on the fatal plain,
Stretch'd on the turf, the mangled chief should lie
With death's cold pallor in his azure eye?
But as the bolts, from smiling skies, descend,
So, undivined, the plans of fate impend;
The hour arrived, when many a whistling spear
Had passed him harmless in its mad career,
When many a claymore on that clattering field
Had clashed its stricture in his blazon'd shield,
One deadly shaft, one death-bewinged dart,
Ensheathed its sliver in his gallant heart.
Just at the moment when his clansmen's shout
Told that the foe was put at last to rout;

The Battle— in Ossian.

When clarions rang and banners blew on high
He caught the fervor of the battle cry,
And with the life-blood streaming from his side,
Exultant shook his batter'd shield, and died !

Oh, never more, with plume and pennon gay,
Shall Fingal rally to the wild foray ;
No more, bold dashing with his dauntless band,
O'erwhelm his foemen with avenging hand.
Let Selma's sons their heavy loss declare,
And weeping maids their willow garlands wear.
Mourn, gentle dames, indulge the briny rain
Since he in sooth the sweetest prince is slain.
Fallen like the bay-tree when the tempest lowers
And blasts its verdure in its palmiest powers ;
Let Selma mourn, let every eye be dim,
For who could lead her glorious hosts like him ?
Who, like himself, the sturdy bow could bend,
And to its mark the singing arrow send ?
Tho' prone to peace, to combat ever loth,
He bore himself conspicuous in both,
And, widely noted for pacific charms,
Was also famous for his feats of arms !

The Battle—in Ossian.

Illustrious Chief, his earthly struggles o'er,
His flowing plume salutes the gale no more.
For when the morn rose radiant and serene,
And strewed its splendor on the crystal scene ;
When thro' the wood the wind was heard to sigh
And breathe its tribute as it wandered by,
Stretch'd on his shield, and garlanded with rue,
They laid his relics where the roses grew.
And, round about, the weeping minstrels thronged,
And high and loud, the funeral notes prolonged.
Then, as the covering on his bosom fell,
The kneeling warriors, kissed his lips farewell,
Trailed all their banners and reversed their spears,
And loos'd the current of their copious tears.
Thus, undisturbed, where flowers luxuriant spring,
Repose the ashes of the honored king ;
Where roses revel and where violets blow,
The chief of Selma slumbers pale and low.

FINGAL'S GRAVE.

OFt have I seen the spot of his repose
Whose might all men acknowledged — Morven's
chief,

Fingal, once glorious, but departed now,
The most deplored of our lamented kings.
He was a hero of illustrious fields,
Deeds, memorable in story and in song,
Made his career a meteor's path of flame,
And treble darkness marked his beam's eclipse.
He was a beacon to the known world; at last,
By Tarno's lake, beneath an ancient oak,
Green-folded in earth's lap, we saw him laid.
And where he rests the thistles flourish rife,
The long grass waves, and o'er his listless head,
One straggling rose-bush shakes its single bloom
In the unfrequent blast. These bounds comprise,
These narrow bounds, the whole of his demesne
Who once possessed wide empire. Oh, observe

Fingal's Grave.

To what small space may mightiness contract,
To what proportions glory be compressed,
And majesty restricted, when, like this,
For all his pomp, his greatness, his renown,
I compass with three steps his grave.

Four grey stones
Inclose the spot where Fingal sleeps profound ;
Waves wash the shore at intervals and moan,
And water-fowl pipe shrilly 'mid the reeds.
The kingfisher's brilliant plumage is discerned ;
The thin crane's sombre crest, and o'er the waves,
Majestically, a wild swan drifts in pride.

A hare leaps sudden from the grass and hears
No sound to fright him to his lair again ;
He gambols on the green-sward undisturbed.
One might not know a warrior slept beneath,
Who shook defiance on a thousand fields,
And spread tumultuous terror 'mongst his foes,
Since now not even the timorous hare has dread,
Stands in no awe of him, nor fears him more,
While frequent from the wildwoods stalk the deer
To crop the green grass o'er his senseless breast.

Fingal's Grave.

Here came full oft, more lovely for her grief,
The sorrowing beauty of Slimora's isle,
Her cheek suffused with tears. The twain loved well;
His eyes that flashed fierce anger in the feud,
Had oft with tender love-gaze dwelt on hers,
And his strong arm that hurled remorseless death,
She oft had leaned on in his tranquil hours.
Thus musing long beside his quiet grave,
At such times in her agony she seemed,
The while she bowed, out-pouring her pent heart,
The embodiment of beautiful despair.
O incarnation of most lovely woe,
Oft have I seen thee kneeling thus, the while,
Silk-soft thy tresses by the winds were gathered,
Themselves as weightless as the moon-lit mist.

ENCHANTMENT.

I DREAMED I stood with her I love,
Fondly my arms did her entwine ;
Her eyes no longer did reprove,
But looked with tenderness in mine.

We heard the billows' slumberous sound,
And caught the briny breath of gales,
And presently, methought, we found
A shallop ; and we loos'd the sails.

Close-reefed, beneath the oval moon,
We steered thro' seas our foaming way,
To love's elysium wafted soon,
Bright-isled, amid perpetual spray.

Whence issued harmonies divine,
Miraculous the shores along,
And birds that blazed in plumage fine,
Far inland, poured enchanting song.

Enchantment.

There by me stood, sedately fair,
 Throughout a space of blissful hours,
My love with lilies in her hair,
 A naiad 'mid the ocean-flowers.

Ah, dearest, on that distant coast,
 Unfailing rapture thrilled my mind
That thou wast, whom I love the most,
 For once, in all love's annals, kind.

No doubtful word to misconstrue
 Escaped us ; pleasant was our speech ;
And soul to soul so close we grew,
 No space existed for a breach.

But perfect unity prevailed
 Between us, and our hearts were light,
Tho' far across the waters sailed,
 Our shallop, fading out of sight.

Wound thus in love's delightful trance,
 We fain had dwelt for evermore.
But morning shook her silver lance,
 And slumber's witchery was o'er.

“ABSENCE CAN NOT CONQUER LOVE.”

ABSENCE can not conquer love,
Futile must her efforts be,
Wheresoever thou may'st rove,
I will still remember thee.

Treasuring fondly in my heart,
Every day the tender prayer,
That no matter where thou art,
Thou may'st richest blessings share.

When the sun descending dips
'Neath the rosy-mantled west,
With thy name upon my lips,
Sweetly will I go to rest.

Fortune shield thy life from ill,
Joy and pleasure be thy lot,
Absent but remembered still,
Never shalt thou be forgot.

SONG.

COME, let thy beaming eyes be bent
On me with soften'd ray,
Speak something of encouragement
To banish my dismay,
And charm from off my spirit bleak
The shadow there that lies ;
Oh, let me hear thee softly speak
And see thy glorious eyes.

I've loved thee fondly from the first,
I've loved thee best of all,
But on my spirit, parched with thirst,
No dews of pity fall.
The fawn upon the flowery plains,
Where cooling waters pour,
May slake his thirst, but mine remains
Unquenched forever more.

Song.

Then come, my little love, my life,
 Speak peace to my despair,
I'm torn with anguish — tossed with strife
 Too rough for me to bear;
And, blown by many a baffling gale
 Thro' angry seas I rove;
Oh, let me in thy favor sail,
 And anchor in thy love.

If one more blest than I should hold
 Thy love for which I crave,
Oh, lay me 'neath the myrtle cold
 With lilies on my grave;
And may it sometimes come to pass
 That thou wilt softly go,
Letting thy tears fall on the grass
 Where I am sleeping low.

AN AUGUST DAY.

WE scraped the clinging moss away,
And deep into the stone
We cut our names, love, and the day
We hither came alone;
An August day, so fair and dry,
With white clouds piled against the sky,
And breezes faintly blown;
And humming in the summer trees
On every hand were honey-bees.

I knew you feared to venture, pet,
Out on the narrow edge,
I caught you in my arms and set
Your feet upon the ledge;
And leaning o'er the dizzy height
I held you to my bosom tight,
And heard you speak the pledge
That sooner might the firm rocks move
Than you should cease to be my love.

An August Day.

Above us clustered berries bent,
The long vines swaying slow,
And let thro' many a loop and rent
The liquid sunshine flow ;
It flecked your lovely hair, and rolled
From tress to tress in waves of gold,
Then falling far below,
I saw it dancing on the cool,
Clear waters in the valley pool.

I wish — I wish when earthly things
Shall darken from my sight,
That hovering o'er on spirit wings
The radiant gates of light,
We still may this fair scene behold,
Transmuted into shining gold,
Bearing in letters bright
Our names, thus graven, and the day
You promised to be mine alway.

IN THE GREENWOOD.

'T IS pleasant when the woods are green and flowers
gem the ground

To seek the woodland's shady haunts, where many charms
abound ;

On reckless wings the songsters flit and twitter as they fly,
And moss-beset the fern-fringed brook forever ripples by.
On some lithe sprig that overhangs the path thro' which
you go

The screaming thrush, with wings aloft, rocks fiercely to
and fro ;

Then bend the pliant bushes down, and you will likely
view,

All in their nice, secreted nest, her eggs of shining blue.

At your approach the timid fawn springs gracefully away,
And breaking twigs and rustling leaves his hurried flight
betray ;

Up some old oak tree's solemn height, that gnarled, mon-
archal, ranks

The squirrels crack their acorn balls and play their artless
pranks.

In the Greenwood.

The ring-dove, in the blasted elm, perched 'mid the
mantling vines,
Pours forth her hurt heart to her mate and dolorously
pines ;
The pheasant drums the hollow log, a general silence
reigns,
Then breaks a clear, sharp treble forth, the mock-bird's
thrilling strains.

There is a fever in your heart which nature can dispel,
A balsam in the balmy wood will make your spirit well.
Go when the early dewdrops fall, and woo with easeful
grace
The pure, sweet air, the living green, the freshness of
the place.
If perfect freedom you would find and languorous uncon-
cern,
Where not a sorrow can intrude to cause your breast to
burn,
Go seek the woodland's shady haunts, where many charms
abound —
In summer, when the woods are green and flowers gem
the ground.

THE MOCCASIN.

MY covert is 'neath the water weed,
Where the lapsing current stays its speed,
And the brook's blue width is my broad demesne,
'Mid growths of lush-grown mosses green,
And the wind, that voices odorous chants,
Sweeps thro' my cool, sweet peppermint plants.

Coiled 'round a briony's pensile stem,
By the banks which marshy blossoms gem,
I loll'd thro' the long, dull afternoon,
And listened the easeful waters croon,
And swayed, as the blue wave heaved or fell,
With my head thrust deep in a lily's bell.

When sloth in my dark blood thinned and died,
I dropped my length on the plashing tide,
And cleft, like the track of an arrowy beam,
My wavy progress across the stream;
And mounting bubbles now burst their beads
Where I sank to my covert of water-weeds.

JACK SHEPPARD.

JACK SHEPPARD was an artist
In his peculiar line;
A kinder friend at a table's end
Ne'er sat him down to dine;
Among the great and famous
His name will surely shine.

'Tis passing sad that I must add
He had one grievous fault.
'Twas a trait of his on the lonely road
To make some pilgrim halt;
To seize the sack from a traveler's back,
And thereby earn his salt.

He needed what was needful
For mortals here below;
To make a haul of the wherewithal
He let his victims know
Rather than trouble the morgue they'd best
Deliver their goods and go.

Jack Sheppard.

Jack Sheppard's memory merits
That it be here averred
That, tho' he had his failings,
Whereof the world has heard,
He was a courteous gentleman
In thought and deed and word.

O, like as not, some kindly eye
With pitying tears grew dim,
And, like as not, some gentle heart
In silence ached for him,
As, in the hangman's cart, he went,
The halter on his knee,
Thro' wind and rain, in Tyburn Lane,
To grace the gallows-tree !

AN UNSEASONABLE SONG.

SPARE those rich strains we long have heard,
This morn upon yon leafless spray ;
It is not Spring, thou warbling bird,
Though wintry clouds be cleared away.

It is not Spring, though soft and fair
The sunlight falls upon thy wing,
And warmly floods the amber air,
With idle promises of Spring.

The breeze upon its flight serene
In vain for flowers may search and call,
For cold, dry winds will whistle keen,
And deep the muffling snow yet fall.

What though, prophetic of her flight,
Oft Winter lift her dreary wing ;
And, merciful, withhold her blight,
A little space ? It is not Spring.

An Unseasonable Song.

Then cease thy strains to warble forth,
For Winter will not hark thy song,
And heedless of thee, in the north,
The storm is gathering wild and strong.

Thus, o'er our heads, if fate's dark cloud
Be parted to the sunlight bland,
We, too, exult with voices loud,
And think a fairer day at hand.

Even whilst through prospects stripped and drear,
Cold, wintry blasts begin to ring,
And 'reft of hope, devoid of cheer,
Like thee, we, too, despair of Spring.

NIGHTFALL.

BLOOMS fold on which the dew has dripped,
The fire-flies wing their sparkling flight ;
Behind the west the sun has dipped,
And tranquil falls the friendly Night.

Sweet freights of downy sleep she brings,
Spreads peace along her quiet way,
And scatters from her sable wings
Calm joys which are denied by day.

With all thy mighty grace uncurbed,
Dear Night, thy balmy realms restore ;
Shed down upon our hearts perturbed,
Sleep's dewy anodyne once more.

Oh, have I not my share of grief,
That bows my heart, that drains mine eye !
But when Night comes with sweet relief,
I kiss the cheek of Care, good-bye.

IN A COPY OF BLOOMFIELD'S POEMS.

HE who these homely verses framed,
Was once in England widely famed.

An humble bard; his songs he made
While working at the cobbler's trade.

Think not, sweet follower of the Nine,
To find his verse as smooth as thine.

Unpolished, crude, ungraced with art,
It yet flowed warmly from his heart.

Ah, though his work is prized no more,
Let us who treasure poet-lore;

Let us to whom the Muse is kind,
Still bear him lovingly in mind.

OMAR KHAYYAM.

I.

FAME'S nightingales, with most melodious tongue,
Within the gardens of achievement winging,
Of old Khayyam, their favorite rose, have sung,
Seven centuries now, and still to-day are singing.

II.

His fame, recovered from the gulping past,
Spared like the Afrite in the vessel's prison,
Whom Time, the Prophet, in the flood had cast,
A mighty fabric of renown, has risen.

While many a pillar which was builded high,
In Omar's day, the winds of heaven defying,
Has like the Sultan and his pomp gone by,
And left but ashes in the desert lying.

QUATRAINS.

FAIRIES.

ACROSS the garden flits the fairy crew,
Such varied tasks the morning hath in store,
They fling abroad the jewels of the dew,
And spread the flowers to the sun once more.

THE SIREN.

With sea-weed hair that mocks the emerald wave,
Singing she comes, and beckons from the shore,
Luring some lover to a watery grave,
Whom friends and kindred shall behold no more.

DEAD HOPES.

Within yon forest where I walked of late,
Seeing the dead leaves flying in the gust,
I thought of hopes which meet a kindred fate,
Torn from the heart, and trodden in the dust.

Quatrains.

THE UNATTAINABLE.

The star upon the mountain, high and bleak,
Straight to its light the summit seems to go,
By toil and patience men have gained the peak,
But not the star which lured them from below.

KEATS.

"Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird,"
He sang, whose fame immortal shall prevail;
The sweetest voice that England yet had heard,
His only rival was the nightingale.

TOIL.

There is a slave to Fortune's magic lamp,
The Afrite, Toil, who, if we choose to try
His skill, will open caverns deep and damp,
And point the place where hidden treasures lie.

DEATH.

Like some good Caliph, his domain the World,
Death rides abroad, and looking on we see,
For all the terror of his flags unfurled,
He only speaks to set some captive free.

Quatrains.

THE RED ROSE.

This blood-red rose was one time white as snow ;
I know the secret of its crimson stain ;
In this same flower it chanced once long ago,
Two fairies slept, and in their dreams were slain.

CHIVALRY.

Here is a story of the feudal days :
A maiden from her kindred torn apart
Droops in a dungeon, and a plum'd knight lays
Siege to the prison and the maiden's heart.

CONSCIENCE.

“ Rest, rest, perturbed spirit,” Hamlet spake
To the sad Ghost that would not lie resigned ;
So Conscience speaks, when troubled and awake,
The Spectre of Remorse disturbs the mind.

TRAGEDY.

Midnight the hour ; behold, a gondolier ;
The scene is Venice ; 'tis a gala night ;
Two lovers whispering, — and the rival near, —
Surprised ; the duel ; and the murderer's flight.

Quatrains.

RICHARD III.

One tyrannous and bloody act has power
To make a name detested for all time ;
The slaughter of the sweet babes in the Tower,
Of his foul record was the crowning crime.

HOPE.

Beyond our reach, and like a priceless token,
The bauble Hope lures glittering and fair ;
A moment more, and like a bubble broken,
Crushed by a breath, it perishes in air.

RILEY.

Not like the Lark that mounting blithe and strong
Seeks but to chant to some diviner sphere ;
But like the Thrush, he sings a lowlier song,
Of simpler beauty, for the Earth to hear.

THE HEALER.

CALM, majestic, He stands;
Healing in His potent hands;
Here a blind Bartimeus cries,
“Rabbi, ope my sightless eyes”;
There a leper, vile and mean,
Plucks His garment, and is clean.
None who seek are e’er denied,
But their wants are all supplied.

Mortal, dost thou covet peace?
He who bade the tempest cease,
Notes the sparrow when it falls,
Stands with reaching arms, and calls!
Whatsoever thy bosom crave,
If it profit thee to have,
He will grant, in whole or part,
To thy fervent-asking heart.

Hast thou ills of any kind,
Weighing heavy on thy mind?
Rankles trouble’s poisoned dart,
Painful, in thy fevered heart?
Come, for no one else can be
Loving, merciful, as He.
Thou hast need to try His skill,
For He cureth every ill.

IN PACE.

I.

WHERE the yew and the rosemary darkle,
Come mourn for a clay-cold maid,
Whose eyes are forlorn of their sparkle,
The rose of whose cheek is decayed.

II.

Though the fragrance is rife in the clover,
And the leafage is green on the tree,
The maiden shall tryst with her lover,
No more on the flower-deck'd lea.

III.

No more by the rivulet stilly,
In the tranquil and cool evening air,
Shall she cull the white stars of the lily,
To twine in the night of her hair.

In Pace.

IV.

In vain shall he wait her who dearly
In his bosom her image enshrined,
When the calm evening star, rising early,
Recalls her mild eyes to his mind.

V.

Perchance the gray dawn may deceive him,
May picture her face in his dreams,
But the light of the morn will bereave him,
Dispelling his bliss with its beams.

VI.

But maiden, thy halcyon slumber
Shall rosy with peacefulness be ;
No sorrow thy heart may encumber,
Asleep, 'neath the evergreen tree.

THE TEMPEST.

GATHERING forth his raging legions,
Soon the tempest will appear;
Screaming petrels and sea pigeons,
Circling, bode disaster near.

Brawny seamen, whom the demon
Storm has never brought dismay,
Soon may fashion prayers from ashen
Lips that never knew to pray.

Eyes that unto fear were strangers,
Hopeless soon to heaven may glance;
Eyes that meeting former dangers,
Stared them out of countenance.

Hark! the distant, sullen thunder
Sounds upon the Tempest's horn;
Many a heart must perish under
Salt-sea waves before the morn.

ÆSOP ON THE FROG.

MEN have not liked you, and your mean estate,
Sunk to the lowest in the downward scale,
Is now the butt of ridicule and hate;

While they, forsooth, within their social pale,
Count fellow-creatures, puffed with pride as great,
Who croak more loudly, and to less avail.

ALETTE.

ALAS, for my sad heart, Alette;
That on the liliated lea we met,
What time the flowerets, gleaming bright,
With dewdrops in the fading light,
Each lifted up its fairy cup,
Unto the dripping night.

Faint shone the pearly moon, Alette;
The moist stars glowed like berries set
Amid a spray of withered vine;
Out-oozed the Night-god's lethal wine;
And balmy sleep, when earth quaffed deep,
Stole through the thin moonshine.

I raised my eager eyes, Alette,
The fragrant flowers glistened wet;
I heard thy footfalls on the lea,
Coming amid the dews to me;
And that still night, a shower of light,
My soul went out to thee.

Alette.

Thou wouldst not hear my words, Alette ;
But badst me thy sweet face forget.

Ah ! nevermore at eventide
Shall rest in my sad heart abide,

 Though night benign with lethal wine,
Pledge peace to all beside.

I sigh, and pine away, Alette ;
And when my star of life is set,
My shade shall haunt, a weary ghost,
The flowery lea where love was crossed,
 And hopes that burst in blossom first
Were earliest to be lost.

THE UNREALIZED.

THERE'S many a branch with flowers fair
Gives promise of a fruitful Fall,
That soon will be as stript and bare,
As if it ne'er had bloomed at all.

And many a hope, which blossoms now
Around the Heart, will soon decay,
Leaving it barren as the bough
From which the flowers have dropped away.

Alas, that e'er the Heart should take
Delight in things that can not be ;
Or that the ruthless wind should shake
The cherished blossoms from the tree.

THE LANDING AT SAN SALVADOR.

WHEN after many a weary day
No sign of welcoming shore appeared,
And hope to trembling fear gave way,
As still through endless seas they steered;
The spirit of that faltering crew,
In terror and distrust was shown,
Whose eyes were favored soon to view
The coast-line of a world unknown.

Sweet beckoning memories of Spain,
Of fair Cordova's fanes and towers;
Palos, for which they pined again,
And Seville with its streets of flowers,
Thronged, as to win them to retrace
Their voyage homeward o'er the seas,
Nor follow as a fruitless chase
The mad scheme of the Genoese.

What manner of misguided man
Is he who thus supplants alone
Opinions since the world began
With fangled notions of his own?

The Landing at San Salvador.

To them his tenets were accursed ;
They heard them as an idle tale,
Nor deemed the folly which he nursed
Would soon a continent unveil.

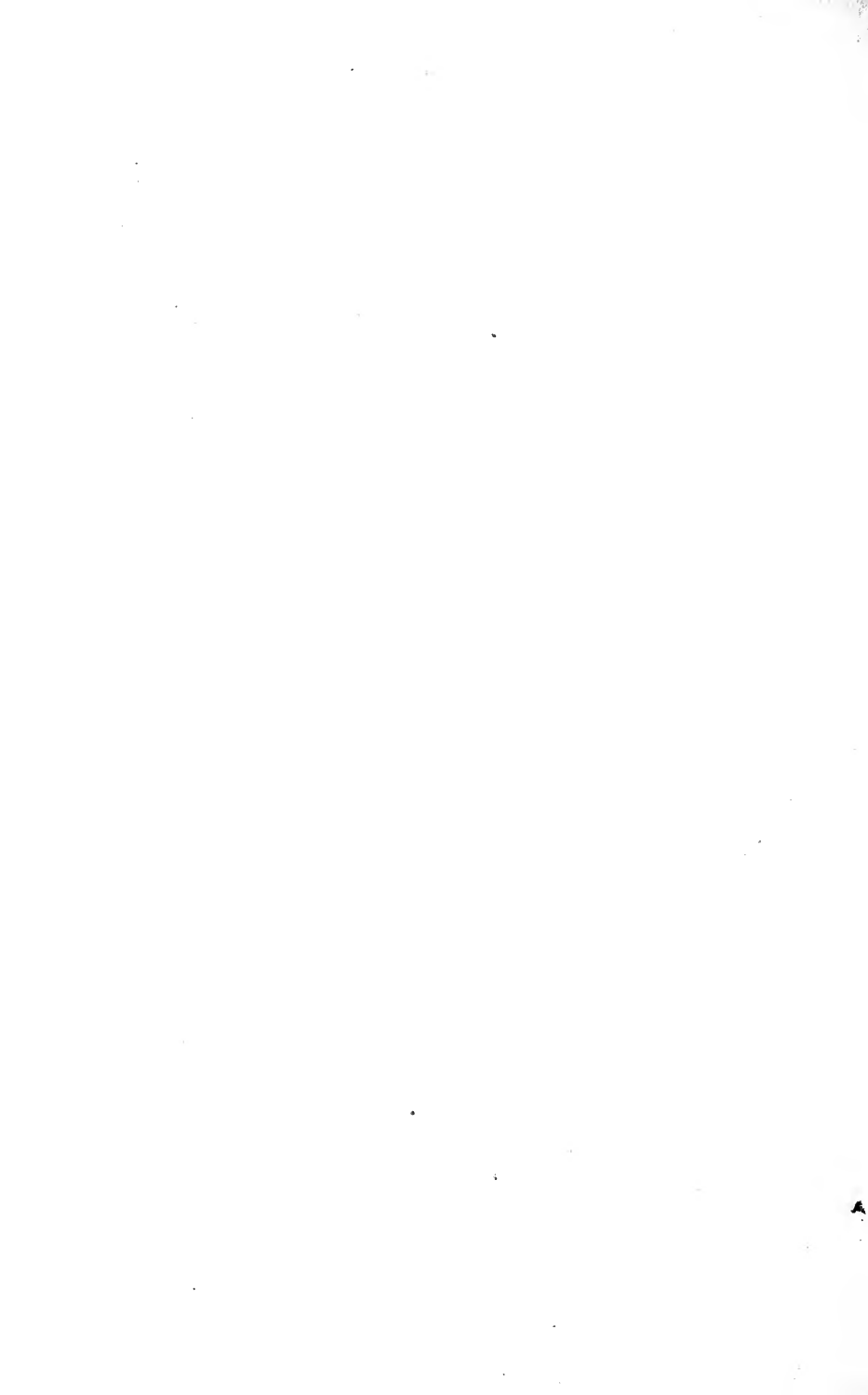
Still sterner grew their olive brows
With scowls they illy could disguise,
And passions, dangerous to arouse,
Looked deadly in their Spanish eyes ;
Till all at once above the crest
Of weary waters which they scanned,
Like some sweet Island of the Blest,
Soft dawned the welcome sight of land.

With what rejoicing then they wreathed
With coronal of vine and flower,
The brows of him who thus bequeathed
To Freedom an immortal dower !
Fit garland to requite his toil,
Full fruited, when, with fervent zeal,
He planted in Columbia's soil
The standard of his loved Castile.

NOTE.

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